

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A computerized method for processing administrative data of a ~~medical~~ service provider ~~including billing, reimbursement, credentialing, preauthorization and collection data~~, comprising the steps of:

defining standard administrative data formats for use by ~~a medical~~ service provider systems, a coordinator system, and a plurality of practice management agent systems, said practice management agent systems being independent of payer systems, in creating and processing administrative data; ~~said administrative data including billing, reimbursement, credentialing, preauthorization and collection data~~

receiving administrative data from said ~~medical~~ service provider, said administrative data including billing, reimbursement, credentialing, preauthorization and collection data;

formatting said administrative data using said standard administrative data formats;

providing formatted administrative data to a practice management agent system for processing, said processing including providing the formatted administrative data to payer systems;

tracking the formatted administrative data transferred between said service provider system and said practice management agent systems;

creating ~~neutral~~ objective, historical evaluation data ~~for said coordinator system from the tracked formatted by tracking~~ administrative data transferred between said ~~medical~~ service provider system and said practice management agent systems, wherein ~~said administrative data is in said standard administrative data formats~~, said neutral objective, historical evaluation data ~~including~~ consisting of price, features, turnaround time, ancillary services, guarantees, ~~[[and]]~~ and customer service information; and

providing said ~~neutral~~ objective, historical evaluation data to said ~~medical~~ service provider system for evaluation and selection of a practice management agent system from the plurality of ~~[[said]]~~ practice management agent systems.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of providing software modules from said coordinator system to said medical service provider

system for generating said administrative data transactions in said standard administrative data formats.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of providing software modules from said coordinator system to said practice management agent systems for processing said administrative data transactions in said standard administrative data formats.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of registering with said coordinator system said selection of said practice management agent system by said medical service provider system.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
evaluating security data provided to said coordinator system by said practice management agent system for accessing said administrative data of said medical service provider; and

authorizing said access to said administrative data for said practice management agent system by said coordinator system.

6. (Currently Amended) An agent-neutral computerized system for providing administrative services for a medical service provider, comprising:

~~means for defining administrative data formats for use by a medical service provider system and practice management agent systems in creating and processing administrative data;~~

~~means for creating agent-neutral evaluation data in said coordinator system by tracking administrative data transactions transferred between said medical service provider system and said practice management agent systems;~~

~~means for obtaining additional agent-neutral evaluation data for utilization by said medical service provider; and~~

~~means for providing said agent neutral evaluation data to said medical service provider for selection of a practice management agent system from a plurality of practice management agent systems~~

means for defining standard administrative data formats for use by service provider systems, a coordinator system, and a plurality of practice management agent systems, said practice management agent systems being independent of payer systems, in creating and processing administrative data;

means for receiving administrative data from said service provider, said administrative data including billing, reimbursement, credentialing, preauthorization and collection data;

means for formatting said administrative data using said standard administrative data formats;

means for providing formatted administrative data to a practice management agent system for processing, said processing including providing the formatted administrative data to payer systems;

means for tracking the formatted administrative data transferred between said service provider system and said practice management agent systems;

means for creating objective, historical evaluation data from the tracked formatted administrative data transferred between said service provider system and said practice management agent systems, said objective, historical evaluation data consisting of price, features, turnaround time, ancillary services, guarantees, and customer service information; and

means for providing said objective, historical evaluation data to said service provider system for evaluation and selection of a practice management agent system from the plurality of practice management agent systems.

7. (Currently Amended) A system for providing administrative services for a medical service provider, comprising:

a coordinator system for standardizing administrative data formats for processing administrative data of a medical service provider system by a first medical practice management agent system, said medical practice management agent systems being independent of payer systems, said coordinator system providing data access authorization and security for said administrative data of said medical service provider system to said first medical practice management agent system, and for providing evaluation data from said first medical practice management agent system for evaluation by said medical service provider system;

a billing and reimbursement module located within the coordinator system, said billing and reimbursement module enabling the processing of the administrative data by providing the standardized data formats for processing by the medical practice agent systems;

an interface module located within the coordinator system for accessing the administrative data generated in the standardized data format, said interface module transfers the administrative data to the medical practice agent systems and transfers processed data from the medical practice agent systems to the medical service provider system;


an evaluation module located within the coordinator system for creating historical performance data based upon administrative data processing by said medical practice agent systems;

a first communication link between said medical service provider system and said coordinator system;

a second communication link between said medical practice agent system and said coordinator system;

wherein said standardized said administrative data format substantially eliminates costs incurred by said medical service provider system for switching from said first medical practice management agent system to a second medical practice management agent system; and

wherein said administrative data includes billing, reimbursement, credentialing, preauthorization and collection data.

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8. (cancelled)
 9. (cancelled)
 10. (Original) The system in claim 7, wherein said standard data format includes coordinator-set operational standards and computer system interface standards.
 11. (cancelled)
 12. (cancelled)
 13. (cancelled)
 14. (cancelled)
 15. (cancelled)